

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

March 3, 2006

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**LAWINGER SENTENCED TO TWO YEARS IN PRISON
IN COMMERCIAL GUIDING CASE
INVOLVING ILLEGAL DEER AND TURKEY HUNTING**

Madison, Wisconsin -- Stephen P. Sinnott, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Adam L. Lawinger, DOB 2/7/1978, of Blue River, Wisconsin, was sentenced today by U.S. District Court Judge Barbara B. Crabb to two concurrent terms of 24 months in prison. In addition, the District Court ordered Lawinger to pay \$73,534 to the State of Wisconsin to compensate for the trophy white-tailed deer and wild turkey illegally harvested by Lawinger and his hunting clients. Judge Crabb also ordered that Lawinger could not hunt, fish or guide during three years of supervised release beginning after Lawinger's release from custody. As a now-convicted felon, Lawinger is banned from possessing firearms.

On December 19, 2005, Lawinger pled guilty to a two-count Information that charged him with: (Count 1) conspiring, between November 2002 and May 2, 2005, to sell and transport wildlife valued greater than \$350 (trophy white-tailed deer and wild turkeys) taken in violation of Wisconsin law; and (Count 2), on December 8, 2004, engaging in the sale and transportation of wildlife worth more than \$350 (trophy white-

tailed deer), knowing that the deer were taken in violation of Wisconsin law.

According to the Information, Lawinger, through his business, Blue River Outfitters (BRO), provided commercial guided white-tailed deer and wild turkey hunts on land owned and leased by Lawinger and by an unindicted co-conspirator in Richland and Iowa Counties, Wisconsin. At his guilty plea hearing, Lawinger admitted that he and an unindicted co-conspirator sold guided deer and turkey hunts to out of state hunters and, that in connection with these hunts, violated numerous Wisconsin laws including: (1) knowingly permitting hunters to kill deer and turkeys without licenses; (2) directing hunters not to kill female deer in "Earn-A-Buck" zones; (3) repeatedly using female deer carcasses to register multiple buck deer killed by BRO hunters; (4) baiting deer within the chronic wasting disease control zones; (5) shining and shooting deer at night; and (6) allowing hunters to kill turkeys with a .22 rifle.

Charges against forty-six hunters from eleven different states have been filed in state and federal courts following a two-year investigation into illegal white-tailed deer and turkey hunting in southwest Wisconsin. In connection with interviews and six search warrants executed across the United States, officers seized 30 mounted trophy deer alleged to have been illegally taken along with numerous rifles and compound bows.

United States Attorney Sinnott noted that the sentence was the result of a lengthy and complex investigation conducted jointly by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources wardens and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agents. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Timothy M. O'Shea.

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